

## **Introduction**

Consumers are expressing a renewed interest in buying food directly from the farmer or grower in their local areas. One reason for this consumer change is the new awareness of the importance of fresh vegetables and fruit in the diet, which are creating opportunities for marketing local produce to consumers through farmers' markets. Also, the economic opportunities and rewards of the markets in a community's development are being realized from community leaders.

Missouri Farmers' Markets have seen a great increase over the past 10 years, with 53 Missouri markets in 1997 to 131 markets in 2007. These markets support locally grown products and agricultural diversity, providing the freshest produce at fair prices while enhancing local economies. You can view a complete listing of all Missouri Farmers' Markets online : <http://agebb.missouri.edu/fmktidir/index.htm>.

Or log onto the Missouri Farmers' Market Blog: <http://mofarmersmarket.blogspot.com/> for the latest news and information on farmers' markets in Missouri.

The purpose of this manual is to provide a reference for those wanting to start a new farmers' market in Missouri or re-organize a current market. If your community would like assistance in organizing a farmers' market or know of a farmers' market that is not listed in the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Market Directory, please contact:

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